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ABSTRACT

A study assessed the governance and administration of vocational and technical education in Utah. To gather data for the study, a team of four vocational educators experienced in vocational governance and administration spent one week in Utah. During that time, the members of the team attended a presentation of testimony on governance before a combined meeting of the joint legislative committee on vocational education and the Utah State Board for Vocational Education. In addition, they reviewed the administration of vocational education in the state through interviews with state and local vocational administrators and educators. Based on data obtained from these two sources, the research team identified three major concerns common to several groups and many individuals in Utah. These concerns centered on: elective versus appointive boards, a third board for vocational education, and placement as a program standard. In view of the on-going conflict between agency boards over who will control vocational education in Utah, the research team recommended that the Utah State Legislature and those responsible for the development of vocational education in the state establish a set of short- and long-term goals for vocational education and then form a governance committee incorporating as many as possible of the principles of effective governance. (MN)

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN UTAH

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FOREWORD

This report is the result of an assessment of governance and administration of vocational-technical education in the state of Utah. A team formed by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education studied governance in the state and reported to a joint committee of the legislature and the Utah State Board for Vocational Education. The team also reviewed administration in the Vocational Division of the State Department of Education and reported to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Director of Vocational Education. This publication is a report of the findings of the National Center team.

We are grateful to Dr. Byrl Shoemaker, former State Director of Vocational Education, Columbus, Ohio and Dr. Don Gentry, State Director of Vocational Education, Indianapolis, Indiana for their contribution to the study through service on the review team. Also serving on the team were Dr. Floyd McKinney and Dr. Bill Stevenson of the National Center staff. The study was conducted in the Evaluation Division under the leadership of Dr. N. L. McCaslin. Appreciation is also expressed to Marilyn Orlando and Priscilla Ciulla for their contribution to the final report.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF UTAH

Introduction

The state of Utah, along with many other states in the nation, has had persistently serious problems with the question of governance of vocational education. Originally states simply enacted the vocational education legislation required to make them eligible for federal dollars. As vocational education expanded and changed to meet the changing needs and expectations in the respective states, governance structures were created or altered in reaction to each new demand. The growth of post-secondary education, the move into adult services, and the required support structure all created new governance questions and varying responses.

Political, social, and organizational changes have occurred which demand different responses from vocational education. The population is becoming more highly educated and the work place is requiring a more highly skilled or technically trained worker. Industry faces a shortage of workers, the number of untrained and unemployed is increasing, and continuing education and skill training for present employees are critical. In the midst of this, the major vehicle designed to deliver this accelerated and more sophisticated training is searching for the stability of a sound governance structure and the responsiveness of a unified administration.

Vocational education is now in a period of more stable growth, accelerated change, and increased concern for responsiveness to need. This means that those who determine governance and those who are guided by it must determine how the system can best be governed to achieve those goals and outcomes demanded of it. Legislators, citizens, board members, and others in Utah have studied and debated this question for some time. It appears that now is the time for action. Closely aligned with the governance question is the need for a review of the administration of vocational education.

For the purposes of the study described in this report the two topics--governance and administration are defined as follows. Governance refers to those laws and regulations which come from the legislature and the policy statements of the Utah State Board for Vocational Education (USBVE). Administration, on the other hand, is viewed as the regulations and processes whereby the state vocational staff carry out the mandates of the USBVE.

The Assessment Process

A team of four vocational educators (see appendix A) experienced in vocational governance and administration assembled by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education spent one week in Utah and participated in the following major activities.

1. A presentation of testimony on governance before a combined meeting of the joint legislative committee on vocational education and the Utah State Board for Vocational Education (USBVE).

2. A review of the administration of vocational education in the state through interviews with the staff of the Department of Education, the Division of Vocational Education, and local vocational education administrators and staff.

This report presents a summary of the testimony given on governance and reviews the findings and recommendations on administration. The team was impressed with the dedication and determination of all those persons involved in the difficult decisions on how to improve the delivery of vocational education. The team agrees with the statement expressed so often "We have studied and discussed long enough. Now it is time for action." The sections following present the findings and recommendations of the team--first on governance, and then administration.

Governance of Vocational Education

Introduction

Again, governance deals with those legislative laws and regulations and the USBVE policies designed to give direction and support to vocational education. The team approached the question of governance through the following points.

1. The role (expectations) of vocational-technical education.
2. The functions of governance.
3. The principles (characteristics) of effective governance.
4. The structure of governance of vocational-technical education in other states.
5. The process of governance decisions.

Role (expectations) of Vocational Technical Education

The first step in designing a structure to govern vocational education is to decide what it is the state wants vocational-technical education to accomplish. This is basically the job of those elected officials representing the people with input from vocational and other educators, employers, students/parents, and others. While program arrangements and curriculum content may be constantly changing to meet job demands the basic role should remain fairly constant. Clear decisions and open communication should indicate which of the role(s) is the most appropriate for the state system to pursue. Among the possible roles are the following:

1. Assist with economic development.
2. Train for current jobs.
3. Increase worker productivity.
4. Assist with career choice.
5. Assure equity for disadvantaged, handicapped, both sexes, minorities, and all ages.
6. Help decrease unemployment.

One or all of these roles may be selected, but it is important that the decision be made and clearly communicated to those involved. The role of secondary and postsecondary, if different, should be specified. The next step in this governance design process is a review of what governance should be designed to do for the governed body.

Functions of Governance

Those given responsibility for governance should clearly understand its functions. A clear separation between governance and administration is essential for an effective and efficient organization. The functions should be carefully considered in designing the governance structure. In the view of the team, major functions of governance are as follows.

1. To provide:
   - leadership
   - advocacy
   - visibility
   - direction
2. To establish policy, goals and parameters for:
   - planning
   - program approval
   - program standards
   - fund allocation
   - other administrative activities
3. To assure accountability.
4. To review evaluations.

Governance is responsible for the above functions which provide support and chart the course for the organization. Those designing structure must next consider some essential principles necessary for effective governance.

Principles (characteristics) of Effective Governance of Vocational-Technical Education

The legislature should incorporate as many of the following principles in the governance structure as possible. This list can serve to judge the extent to which the present or proposed structure will contribute to an effective organization. The following principles or guides were thought to be most important to effective governance of vocational-technical education.

1. One governing body should have authority, responsibility, and accountability for all vocational-technical education regardless of institutional arrangements.

2. Governance is responsible for policymaking not administration.

3. One state staff should administer the total program of vocational-technical education.

4. The governing body should communicate directly with the person responsible for administration (State Director of Vocational Education).

5. The governing body should spend sufficient time on the issues of vocational-technical education to assure understanding.

6. The governing body should develop budget recommendations for the legislature based on assigned roles and expectations discussed in an earlier section.

7. The governing body should distribute legislative allocations based on role and expectations.

8. The governing body must not be unduly influenced by partisan politics.

9. The governing body should involve representatives from business, industry, agriculture, labor and others served by vocational-technical education.

To summarize, the team is especially concerned that all of vocational-technical education be under one body which has the

responsibility, authority, accountability, and funding to carry out the role and duties assigned to it. This concentration of authority and responsibility has the following advantages over a system governed by more than one governing body.

1. It reduces unnecessary competition, duplication of effort, and dissipation of resources.
2. It facilitates the establishment of statewide priorities for training.
3. It improves articulation between levels.
4. It increases and centralizes accountability.
5. It provides continuity in training for students.
6. It stimulates responsiveness and efficiency of the delivery system.
7. It encourages improved planning.
8. It provides advocacy and visibility for vocational technical education.
9. It makes possible more efficient use of resources.
10. It allows greater access to the governing body and stimulates input into policy.
11. It is more responsive to economic development needs.
12. It facilitates contact with business, industry, agriculture, and labor.

The principles of effective governance mentioned above should be considered in any deliberations and decisions on governance. The structure which governance has taken in other states is discussed the following section.

The Structure of Governance of Vocational-Technical Education in Other States

Five basic governance structures have evolved as states designed a system thought to be most effective for vocational-technical education. Each of these structures has its advantages and disadvantages and no one system is best under all circumstances. In view of this, the team urges that a structure be built which incorporates as many of the principles discussed in the previous section as possible. While each state differs somewhat in governance, the following types generally describe the existing structures.

1. The State Board of Education (K-12) also acts as the State Board for Vocational Education.
2. A separate State Board for Vocational Education exists.
3. One governing board exists for all of education.
4. The State Board of Higher Education also acts as the State Board for Vocational Education.
5. A coordinating committee (board) for vocational Education.[1]

To repeat, the responsibility and authority vested in the board, the attention given to vocational education, the clarity of policy and strength of governance seem to be more important than simply selecting a structure.

The Decision Process

This report has presented some vital considerations in structuring an effective governance system. The accompanying

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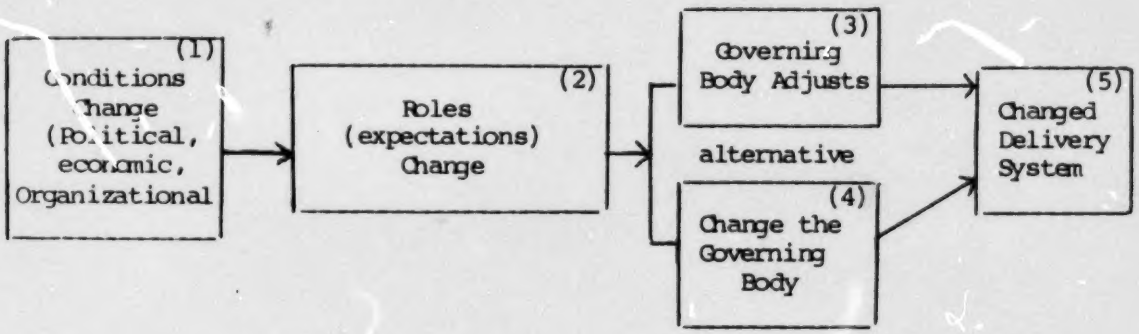
[1]Gentry, Don K. National Documentary Study of the State Level Governance of Vocational Education. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1979.

illustration shows that as political, economic, or organizational changes occur (1); the role and expectations of the organization also change (2); when role changes occur the governing body and the organization adjusts to meet the new needs (3); or the governing body changes (4); to result in changes in the delivery organization (5).



It would appear that Utah is at the critical third step. It is recognized that conditions have and are changing with a concommitant change in the role and expectations for vocational-technical education. The questions now faced by state leadership is whether the present governing body (USBVE), with expanded responsibility for all vocational-technical education can adjust or will it be necessary to create a new governing structure to meet the needs of the state.

Beyond governance the effectiveness of the organization is dependent upon the quality of administration of the staff

responsible for the delivery of training. The next section of this report presents information about the administration of vocational-technical education, its strengths and weaknesses, and makes recommendations for its improvement.

ADMINISTRATION OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN UTAH

Introduction

The team of vocational educators assembled by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, also studied the administration of vocational-technical education in Utah. The team interviewed some twenty individuals from the state staff as well as local administrators of vocational-technical education at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

An interview guide incorporating the various elements of administration was constructed and used by individual team members (Appendix B). This guide and its related ranking instrument along with the comments of the team members were combined to produce an oral report to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Director of Vocational Education as well as this written report.

The team approached the study of the quality and effectiveness of administration as including policies, processes, and emotions. The written policies and the processes to implement those policies are usually fairly observable and can be judged objectively, but these indicators are not sufficient to see the total picture. The emotions involved in the job are an important and often overlooked factor. Dedication, morale, frustration, and anger can be very important elements in judging the quality of administration.

Areas of Study

The team felt it was important to discuss certain general questions with each of the persons interviewed. The team asked:

- o What do you perceive to be the role of the Division of Vocational Education?
- o What do you think the State Board expects of the Division?
- o What do you think the Division expects of you?
- o What are your administrative, compliance functions?
  - What percent of time is spent on these?
- o What are your leadership functions?
  - What percent of time is spent on these?

In addition to these general questions the team interviewed each individual in ways to reach a conclusion as to the effectiveness of administration in the following areas.

1. Management (top level) effectiveness
2. Supervisory (second level) effectiveness
3. Associations with other workers
4. Division work efficiency
5. Communication
6. Job evaluation, promotion, salary
7. Job description, training, development
8. Job satisfaction and job security
9. Leadership functions
10. Overall administrative effectiveness

Other areas of interest surfaced as discussions proceeded. However, the items listed above remained the major basis for

assessing quality and effectiveness. The strengths and weaknesses of the administrative system within the Division of Vocational Education are, in the judgement of the study team, as follows.

Strengths in the Administration of Vocational-Technical Education

1. The division is responsive to the needs and is effective in assisting with the solution of problems of local schools and vocational-technical education programs at both the secondary and postsecondary level.

   a. The State Director of Vocational Education is accessible.

   b. The state specialists are competent and responsive.

2. The state vocational education staff members feel positive about their individual jobs. They feel that what they are doing is worthwhile and that they are doing their job well. The staff feel as secure about their jobs as is possible under the present economic conditions.

3. Local and state staff have a real desire to improve the quality of the delivery of vocational-technical education.

4. The Utah Vocational Association is supportive of the division and endorses the concept of a state board for all vocational education, with some specified changes.

5. Local and state staff feel that the State Board and the State Superintendent have recently made improvements in the administration of vocational-technical education in the following ways.

   a. The State Director sets agenda for the USBVE.

   b. The State Director meets with USBVE.

   c. The USBVE has separate and distinct meeting for vocational education.

Weaknesses in the Administration of Vocational Technical Education

1. Leadership by the second level (coordinators) is nonexistent or very poor.

a. There is dissention, difference in philosophy, and lack of coordination and cooperation between two of the coordinators in the division.

b. Staff feel compelled to choose sides between coordinators.

c. Specialists do not feel free to cross into another coordinators area (secondary/postsecondary).

2. Some staff actively cultivate legislators and board members to express personal views not department or division positions.

3. Dividing staff of the division into secondary/postsecondary is counterproductive to effective delivery of vocational-technical education.

4. Division data are inadequate for decision making.

a. Unable to get timely, accurate data from local schools.

b. Division feels it has low priority in data processing.

5. A clear state policy on program standards does not exist.

a. Division does not have standards and enforcement powers it needs to improve or terminate programs.

b. Local school officials appear to have veto power over unpopular standards.

6. Staff feel they do not spend enough time on leadership (innovation, change, program improvement) activities.

7. Staff tend to operate on their own agenda, with little consideration or concern for the total program of vocational-technical education.

8. Communication on job related matters is adequate but staff do not feel involved in decision making to the extent they would like.

9. Supervisors and staff feel they cannot receive a positive evaluation unless there is money to give a raise. In other words if money is not available for a raise the individual must receive a poor evaluation.

Obviously, many of the administrative strengths and weaknesses pointed out in this report came from comments by staff members; however, the team feels that the points listed are a legitimate basis for change in order that those needing training could be served more effectively. The following recommendations are made in an attempt to correct some of the identified weaknesses.

Recommendations

1. Internal dissention within the division must be eliminated.
    a. All program service area specialists should be under one coordinator.
    b. Eliminate the designation of secondary/postsecondary within the division.
    c. After a decision is reached all staff must support that decision.
    d. Any unathorized staff contact with state board or legislators must be eliminated.
    e. Support of the State Director by the State Superintendent and USBVE in making these changes must be made evident to all concerned.
2. Limits of decision making power of the State Director of Vocational Education must be clearly stated and supported. The State Director must accept responsibility for making decisions within the authorized span of control.
3. Data requirements should be reviewed to eliminate unnecessary reports.
    a. The Division should have power to withhold funds from any program not providing accurate and timely data.
    b. Priorities for data processing should be reviewed or established.

4. The State Board for Vocational Education should, after full consultation with those affected, establish program standards and state policy for enforcement.

5. The USBVE should give the division the authority and support to carry out any added responsibility and the State Superintendent should actively support this position.

6. The system of staff evaluation should be reviewed and strengthened through a system of objectives and outcomes.

7. The total system of vocational education should be emphasized rather than individual programs, schools or levels.

8. Research, management information, and program improvement should be planned with specific measurable outcomes in the immediate and long-range future.

CONCERNS, CONFLICTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Three Major Concerns

Interviews, private conversations, and public questions identified three major concerns common to several groups and many individuals in Utah. These concerns center on:

1. elective vs. appointive boards,
2. a third board for vocational education, and
3. placement as a program standard.

Elective vs. Appointed Boards: Team members have a variety of experiences and observations which prepare them to make such a comparison. Thirteen states have elected boards and thirty-six states have appointed boards which govern vocational-technical education.[2] Team members can find no consistent pattern of advantages or disadvantages for either type of arrangement. Individual states may, because of tradition or experience, prefer one method of establishing a board over another; however, generally speaking it can not be said that there is any consistent advantage to either system.

A Third Board for Vocational Education: Many individuals interviewed by the team expressed a real concern over the establishment of a third board for vocational education.

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[2]Gentry, Don K. National Documentary Study of the State Level Governance of Vocational Education. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1979.

Eight states have a separate board for vocational education. The remainder of the states place that responsibility with the State Board of Education (31), the Regents for Higher Education (1), a single board for all of education (6), or some combination of boards.[3]

The team can point to some highly effective programs of vocational-technical education operating under a single board as it can with the other governance arrangements. There are also some less effective programs operating under each of the systems.

The team urges those who are designing the governance system for Utah to form an arrangement which incorporates as many as possible of the principles of effective governance discussed earlier in this report. The team does not recommend any particular board arrangement, but it is emphatic in its belief that one board should have the responsibility, authority, accountability, and funding for all of vocational-technical education.

Placement as a Program Standard: Many interviewees, particularly those at the local level, showed deep concern over having placement as a criteria for judging program effectiveness. The State has suggested that any program placing fewer than fifty percent of its completers in either employment related to training or continuing education be considered as below standard. Local schools have resisted this standard.

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[3]Gentry, Don K. National Documentary Study of the State Level Governance of Vocational Education. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1979.

It is the opinion of the study team that for specific job training programs the fifty percent figure could be used in the beginning, but that it should gradually be raised beyond that point. Vocational programs, excluding useful home economics and occupational orientation programs, which do not meet this criteria should certainly be looked upon as not being as effective as the state has a right to expect. One must ask if more than fifty percent are not employed or not continuing their education what are they doing? Certainly, placement should not be the only criteria used to judge programs since it is not the only contribution vocational education makes to the student. However, in view of the fact that vocational education is designed to prepare people for employment, it seems inconsistent not to hold placement as an important standard by which to measure the effectiveness of programs.

Conflict Over Vocational-Technical Education

Utah is experiencing conflict between agency boards (Board of Education and the Regents for Higher Education) over who will control vocational-technical education. This conflict has gone on for some time and several groups have studied the question. The study team organized by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education provided an outside view of governance as it relates to effectiveness and suggest a process by which state leadership could make a decision.

The conflict and debate has not subsided and will not until the question of governance is fully solved. Conflict under these

circumstances is perfectly natural and to be expected. There is a natural inclination for institutions to grow toward socially acceptable areas of education. This means serving more students through the expenditure of more dollars.

This conflict may, in the short-run, stimulate effort in the form of new schools and new programs. In the long-run such conflict begins to result in duplication and division. Students find it harder to move from one level to another, over emphasis strengthens one level at the expense of the other.

The situation has not deteriorated to the "armed camp" stage in Utah as it has in some states. In those states it is the person needing training and the industry needing trained people that suffers.

The study team strongly recommend that the legislature and those responsible for the delivery of vocational education take the following steps.

1. The legislature, with the imput of other state leaders and vocational-technical education specialists define the role of vocational-technical education in Utah.

2. The legislature, with the input of the Governor's office and other state leaders, establish a governance system incorporating as many as possible of the principles of effective governance.

3. The state vocational leadership, with the approval of the governing board, establish long-term, intermediate, and short-term goals and standards for vocational technical education and annually measure and report on progress toward these goals and standards.

4. The state vocational and educational leadership review the administrative structure and processes of vocational-technical education for the purpose of unifying and concentrating efforts on the delivery of a total program of vocational education.

Differences of opinion and variety in approaches to problem solution must be encouraged so that decision makers consider a whole range of alternatives. Once a decision is reached through this process, the established system should facilitate movement toward a uniformly accepted set of objectives. Only maximum efficiency and effectiveness can fully serve the occupational education and training needs of the state.

APPENDIX A

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION REVIEW TEAM

APPENDIX A

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION REVIEW TEAM

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APPENDIX B

ASSESSMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS

Assessment of Administrative Effectiveness

Overall Questions

What do you think the Board expects of the Division of Vocational Education?

Roles and Expectations

What are your administrative functions? Percent of time?

What are your leadership functions? Percent of time?

How have your functions changed in the past two year to meet new expectations?

Assessment of Administrative Effectiveness

(1) Management Effectiveness

How is management viewed?

Competent? Fair? Helpful? Respected?

Is number in management appropriate?

Are good decisions made?

Is it clear what department is trying to do?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(2) Supervisory Effectiveness

How are in-department supervisors viewed?

Competent? Fair? Helpful? Respected?

Are right actions taken?

Are good decisions made?

Is it clear what supervisor expects?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(3) Work Associations

Is there cooperation?

Are people friendly and helpful?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(4) Department Work Efficiency

Are procedures appropriate?

Is work distributed fairly?

Is there excessive pressure?

Are supplies and equipment adequate?

Quality of work performed?

Is time used efficiently?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(5) Communication

Is there enough communication within the department?

Is it accurate and timely?

Are employee's opinions valued?

Does communication flow both ways?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(6) Job Evaluation and Promotions

Is quality work recognized and rewarded?

Are promotions appropriate and fair?

Is department most interested in process or outcomes?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(7) Job Description, Planning, Development

Are job duties described and understood?

Is training available when needed?

Is training for advancement possible?

Is new employee orientation adequate?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(8) Job Satisfaction - Job Security

Do staff seem satisfied?

Are jobs rewarding?

Is best use made of staff abilities?

Do staff feel secure?

Rating
(circle)

5	4	3	2	1
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

(9) Other?

(10) Overall Adminis ration Effectiveness

- Best possible use of resources ($, people, policies)
- Getting most jobs done well
- Don't know where we are
- Lots of wated time and effort doing nonproductive tasks
- Nothing getting done

- Major ways effectiveness of department could be increased
- Clearer understanding of what is to be accomplished

Problem

Method of Improvement

- More competent staff

Problem

Method of Improvement

- Better working conditions (communications, relations)

Problem

Method of Improvement

- Others

Problem

Method of Improvement